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## Family conditions responsible for shaping and developing two-dimensional and disintegrated identity of inhabitants of transfrontier regions

(based on the research of the Polish-Czech transfrontier region)

“Once any sign of attachment or cult is perceived as a loss of oneself, identity becomes the only help against alienation.”<sup>1</sup>

J.M. Domenach

At the time of numerous social changes in many modern communities and time of openness towards globalisation processes<sup>2</sup> that very often strengthen the phenomenon of identity disintegration<sup>3</sup>, we tend to accept the need to return to the traditional values. The return is a process of returning to the origin of national culture — frequently to the social community we feel emotionally close to — and we do so in order to strengthen our religiosity and our identity on the grounds of comfort and cultural security. From the very early years of infancy to maturity such an environment should be provided to an individual by the primary micro-community — the family — the cradle of personality and the shield from the state of cultural homelessness.

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<sup>1</sup> J. M. Domenach: *Europa: wyzwanie dla kultury*. Warszawa 1992, Niezależna Oficyna Wydawnicza, pp. 32—33.

<sup>2</sup> Problems of globalisation processes together with its social consequences are described in: M. Okólski: *W drogę. Globalizacja i regionalizacja a międzynarodowa mobilność ludzi*. Nowa Res Publica 1998, No 2—3, p. 101; Z. Łomny: *Edukacja aksjologiczna wyzwaniem dla epoki. Od regionalizmu do planetaryzmu*, (in:) T. Kukołowicz, M. Nowak (eds): *Pedagogika ogólna. Problemy aksjologiczne*. Lublin 1997, Redakcja Wydawnictw Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, pp. 271—272.

<sup>3</sup> The terms: dispersion, doubling or split of identity are sometimes used by different researchers interchangeably. The problem of dispersed (two-dimensional) identity is described in: J. Nikitorowicz: *Tożsamość w edukacyjnym procesie wielokulturowym*. (in:) M. M. Urlińska (ed.): *Edukacja a tożsamość etniczna*. Toruń 1995, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, pp. 119—121; J. Nikitorowicz: *Pogranicze — Tożsamość — Edukacja międzykulturowa*. Białystok 1995, Wydawnictwo Uniwersyteckie “Trans Humana”, p. 93; T. Szkudlarek: *Dialektyka Innego i postkolonialna tożsamość*. (in:) M. M. Urlińska (ed.), op. cit., p. 26; J. Kosowska-Rataj: *Tożsamość narodowa a młodzież akademicka*. (in:) Z. Łomny (ed.): *Budowa Zaufania Międzynarodowego celem edukacji globalnej*. Opole 1996, Uniwersytet Opolski.

Social and economic changes lead to destabilisation of axiological conditions of many nationalities, including the Polish<sup>4</sup>. The changes have caused the modern family to be viewed as a particularly endangered entity. They have also led to changes of interpersonal relations and changes within the family, because certain values have become obsolete. Family erosion, crisis of morality and authority and some turbulent changes concerning young people's systems of values and social needs<sup>5</sup> have become an inseparable element of reality in many different communities. In the presence of such dangers — shaped by everyday life in a constantly changing and socially unstable reality — the condition of modern family requires attention. The traditional character of the family as a principal value is also endangered. The condition of the modern family may be altered together with its traditionally accepted perception — not in its territorial or material categories, i.e. existence conditions<sup>6</sup> — but mainly in terms of interpersonal bonds<sup>7</sup>, i.e. privacy and intimacy<sup>8</sup> experienced within the family. Such understanding of home — widely spread all over Europe — stems from traditions of ancient Greece and Rome and guarantees stable norms, customs, and established forms of communication.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. A. Jawłowska: *Kierunki zmiany kulturowej a jej konsekwencje społeczne*. (in:) A. Rycharczak, M. Federowicz (eds): *Spółczesność w transformacji. Ekspertyzy i studia*. Warszawa 1993, Instytut Filozofii i Socjologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, pp. 187—189; R. Dyoniziak, K. Iwanicka, A. Karwińska, J. Nikołajew and Z. Pucek: *Spółczesność w procesie zmian. Zarys socjologii ogólnej*. Kraków—Szczecin—Zielona Góra 1997, Zachodnie Centrum Organizacji.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. B. Kosek-Nita: *Udział rodziny w procesie transformacji dziedzictwa kulturowego w świetle współczesnych zagrożeń*. (in:) J. Nikitorowicz (ed.): *Rodzina wobec wyzwań edukacji międzykulturowej*. Białystok 1997, Wydawnictwo Uniwersyteckie "Trans Humana", p. 159.

<sup>6</sup> Such deformations, due to taking only one of educational functions of the family into consideration, are proved right in different research analyses. Cf. D. Waloszek: *Oczekiwania rodziców wobec edukacji dzieci jako wynik transformacji ustrojowej*. (in:) J. Nikitorowicz (ed.), op. cit., pp. 312—313.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. L. Dyczewski: *Rodzina — Społeczeństwo — Państwo*. Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego: Lublin 1994, pp. 20—26; A. Minkiewicz: *Kryzys więzi rodzinnych i niektóre jego konsekwencje społeczne i kulturowe*. (in:) E. Hałoń (ed.): 1995. *Rodzina — jej funkcje przystosowawcze i ochronne*. Warszawa 1995, Centrum Upowszechniania Polskiej Akademii Nauk; J. Brągiel: *Więź społeczna w rodzinie*. Opole 1996, Pedagogika. Zeszyty Naukowe Uniwersytetu Opolskiego 34; R. Dyoniziak, K. Iwanicka, A. Karwińska, J. Nikołajew and Z. Pucek, op. cit., p. 206.

<sup>8</sup> M. Rembierz comments upon this, writing about 'variations' of home nowadays in the context of modern ideologies (from conservative, liberal, socialistic to totalitarian ones). Cf. M. Rembierz: *Dom rodzinny jako "osobliwy szczegół" w świecie kulturowej bezdomności. Refleksje z filozofii człowieka*. (in:) B. Dymara (ed.): 1998. *Dziecko w świecie rodziny. Szkice o wychowaniu*. Kraków 1998, Impuls, pp. 125—140; Cf. W. Durka: "Tradycyjny" i "nowoczesny" model rodziny polskiej. (in:) L. Janiszewski (ed.): *Współczesne rodziny polskie w okresie radykalnych zmian społecznych. Materiały z konferencji naukowej*. Szczecin 1998, Uniwersytet Szczeciński, pp. 101—104.

The functioning of the family is not the only agent to shape and develop the feeling of an inherited identity<sup>9</sup> — the identity is being developed in the process of interiorization of social attitudes and values. Emotional interpersonal interaction within a small group accompanies child's personal and social identity acquisition<sup>10</sup> and self-acceptance. Acceptance demands maturity of choice and a sense of one's own adequacy<sup>11</sup>, providing conditions for an identity to be born in terms of self-awareness<sup>12</sup>.

A great deal of analyses dealing with the notion of identity provides empirical evidence of differences between shaping an identity of an individual in a homogeneous environment and in a culturally diversified one<sup>13</sup>. It has been claimed that the process of identity acquisition, taking place in the area of overlapping cultures — in an area of various co-existing ethnical, linguistic and

<sup>9</sup> Cf. J. Nikitorowicz: *Szanse i zagrożenia tożsamości rodzinnej na pograniczu kultur*. (in:) J. Nikitorowicz (ed.), op. cit., p. 68; L. Dyczewski: *Kultura w procesie przemian*. Towarzystwo Naukowe Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, Lublin 1995, p. 68.

<sup>10</sup> There have been a lot of attempts to describe the term 'identity' with different criteria established. They are in the studies on the term 'personal identity' and 'social identity'. Cf. L. Witkowski: *Tożsamość i zmiana*. Toruń 1988, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika; Z. Bokszański: *Tożsamość — Interakcja — Grupa. Tożsamość jednostki w perspektywie teorii socjologicznej*. Łódź 1989, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Łódzkiego; J. Miluska: *Relacyjny model rozwoju tożsamości grupowej*. (in:) M. M. Urlińska (ed.), op. cit., p. 38; J. Kossowska-Rataj: *Tożsamość jako kategoria teoretyczna*. (in:) Z. Jasiński and A. Kozłowska (ed.): *Tożsamość narodowa młodzieży na pograniczach*. Opole 1997, Opolska Oficyna Wydawnicza, p. 30.

<sup>11</sup> It is understood as self-awareness of the individual, the emotional and social awareness of group membership, and the need to exist within the group. The interpretation of the identity, created by E. H. Ericson, known mainly as the theory of identity crisis, is made by L. Witkowski. Cf. L. Witkowski: *Rozwój i tożsamość w cyklu życia. Studium koncepcji E. H. Ericsona*. Toruń 1989, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Mikołaja Kopernika, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> The identity results in 'mediation between nature — inheriting and culture'. Cf. J. Nikitorowicz: *Szanse i zagrożenia tożsamości rodzinnej na pograniczu kultur*. (in:) J. Nikitorowicz (ed.), op. cit., p. 70.

<sup>13</sup> The whole variety of cultures, noticeable in different aspects of ethnicity (nationality), language, religion and self-awareness, contributes to the character of the area and influences the identity of the transfrontier region inhabitants. The phenomenon is very characteristic of the area. The transfrontier region is discussed by: Z. Jasiński and T. Korbel (eds): *Zderzenia i przenikanie kultur na pograniczach*. Opole 1988, Wyższa Szkoła Pedagogiczna; A. Sadowski: *Pogranicze. Studia społeczne. Zarys problematyki*. (in:) *Pogranicze*. Vol. 1., Białystok 1992, Wydawnictwa Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego — Filia w Białymstoku; T. Lewowicki (ed.): *Poczucie tożsamości narodowej młodzieży. Studium z pogranicza polsko-czeskiego*. Cieszyn 1994, Uniwersytet Śląski — Filia w Cieszynie; J. Nikitorowicz: *Pogranicze — Tożsamość — Edukacja międzykulturowa*, op. cit.; G. Babiński: *Pogranicze etniczne, pogranicze kulturowe, peryferie. Szkic wstępny problematyki*. Vol. 4. 1994. *Pogranicze. Studia Społeczne*; B. Babiński: *Pogranicze polsko-białoruskie. Etniczność, zróżnicowanie religijne, tożsamość*. Kraków 1997, NOMOS; Z. Kłodnicki: *Zróżnicowanie kulturowe Śląska w świetle skartowań etnograficznych*. (in:) B. Bazieliński (ed.): *Śląsk — etniczno-kulturowa wspólnota i różnorodność*. Wrocław 1995, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, pp. 83—90.

religious phenomena — is perceived as a much more complex process, because these are not only cultural, but also interpersonal interactions. Consequently, depending on the character and type of a transfrontier region, as well as on social relations in which the individual is involved, we talk about the identity, which is two-dimensional, three-dimensional or disintegrated<sup>14</sup>.

Examining the issue of identity shaping processes in transfrontier regions — where identity is determined by cultures permeating one another and by different habits and customs — one may wonder to what extent the process of social accommodation<sup>15</sup> within a culturally diversified area is determined by the family, and to what extent, if any, cultural heterogeneity of the family affects the development of identity of people living in transfrontier regions.

### Culture of the family in transfrontier regions

Introduced by sociologists, “versatile formative context of the family perceived as a social category”<sup>16</sup> has entered other branches of science. It seems extremely important to consider the family’s place in the society, as well as its relations with social and cultural surroundings.

The family, being the smallest social unit, always functions within a certain social environment, within certain limits of a local community, whose characteristic features have been developed on the grounds of historically and socially determined cultural diversity. A strong autonomous family influences the society, and simultaneously, the family is affected by a number of external stimuli closely mirroring dynamic changes of social and cultural nature. Hence, in different studies of the family micro and mezo-structural social conditions constitute the main point of reference; they are more important than macro-structural changes. A local community and the place of living considerably influence formation of national, ethnical and religious attitudes and of the

<sup>14</sup> Cf. T. Lewowicki. *Problemy tożsamości narodowej — w poszukiwaniu sposobów uogólnionych ujęć kwestii poczucia tożsamości i zachowań z tym poczuciem związanych*. (in:) M. M. Urlińska (ed.), op. cit., p. 58; J. Nikitorowicz. *Tożsamość w edukacyjnym procesie wielokulturowym*. (in:) M. M. Urlińska (ed.), op. cit., pp. 119—121; J. Kosowska-Rataj, op. cit.

<sup>15</sup> J. Nikitorowicz claims that the phenomenon of accommodation is accompanied by: amalgamation, situational and internal dualism. It finds its embodiment in tolerance and reciprocal acceptance of Others — Strangers who represent different values and culture. Cf. J. Nikitorowicz. *Szanse i zagrożenia tożsamości rodzinnej na pograniczu kultur*. (in:) J. Nikitorowicz (ed.), op. cit., p. 71.

<sup>16</sup> A. W. Janke. *Wychowanie rodzinne przedmiotem pedagogicznej refleksji*. (in:) S. Kawula, J. Brągiel and A. W. Janke (eds): *Pedagogika rodziny. Obszary i panorama problematyki*. Toruń 1998, Adam Marszałek.

system of individual and social values<sup>17</sup>. Attitudes and values are cultivated within a particular area, through certain patterns of social behaviour that are ascribed to a particular community or to a group that is culturally distinct. With reference to the above, it is believed that the family, settled in a diversified reality, also determines the choice of behaviour patterns and attitudes, triggering formation processes of young people's personality and identity.

Discussing the family as subjected to cultural divergence, one needs to consider two facts. Firstly, autonomy and regional, ethnical and religious uniqueness influence dynamics of family development and its preferred cultural model. Secondly, the dynamics is conditioned by family internal homogeneity or heterogeneity<sup>18</sup>, apparent in cultivation of communal and religious traditions. The family also strongly influences local and group identity of a young generation.

### Cultural diversity of the family in the Cieszyn Silesia transfrontier region

The Polish-Czech transfrontier region has already been studied and described from sociological, psychological — and less frequently economic — perspectives. However, the region appears to be specific also for generating attitudes of tolerance<sup>19</sup>, acceptance, open-mindedness and willingness to learn and accept elements of other cultures and value systems<sup>20</sup>. Harmonious co-existence of communities that are divergent in ethnic, language and — most of all — religious terms<sup>21</sup> provides a good climate for creating a specific character of the

<sup>17</sup> Cf. W. Świątkiewicz (ed.): *Wartości a style życia rodzin. Socjologiczne badania rodzin miejskich na Górnym Śląsku*. Katowice 1992, Uniwersytet Śląski.

<sup>18</sup> In a great deal of studies the term 'family internal diversity' means diversity in seniority of family members and the roles they play in it. Cf. L. Dyczewski, op. cit. (1994), p. 106. However, the author of this paper focuses on the diversity of ethnicity and religion which results from marriages. Although the phenomenon is independent of any environmental (territorial) conditions, it is assumed that it is more frequent in the area of cultural transfrontier region.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. I. Lazari-Pawłowska: *Trzy pojęcia tolerancji*. "Studia Filozoficzne" 1984, No 8; I. Lazari-Pawłowska: *Jeszcze o pojęciu tolerancji*. "Studia Filozoficzne" 1987, No 1, p. 110.

<sup>20</sup> It is proved by numerous empirical analyses concerning the transfrontier region which testify to the actual process of borrowing from "other" values and patterns of living, which enriches culture and identity. Cf. T. Lewowicki, E. Ogrodzka-Mazur and A. Szczurek-Boruta (eds): *Edukacja międzykulturowa w Polsce i na świecie*. Katowice 2000, Uniwersytet Śląski; T. Lewowicki and B. Grabowska (eds): *Młodzież i tolerancja. Studium z pogranicza polsko-czeskiego*. Cieszyn 1998, Uniwersytet Śląski — Filia w Cieszynie.

<sup>21</sup> In Cieszyn Silesia there are about 14 registered denominations among which the Catholics and the Protestants are considered the most important numerically. As Bielsko-Żywiecka Diocese informs, the Roman Catholic Church amounts to 660,000 members while the Protestant Church

transfrontier community. It gives rise to a special kind of identity, commonly characterised as multi-dimensional, two-dimensional or three-dimensional<sup>22</sup>. In case of national and ethnic identification the community experiences inner duality<sup>23</sup>. Numerous studies carried out in this region seem to confirm the existence of this phenomenon. However, there are markedly fewer studies of identity and religious beliefs shaped in a religiously heterogeneous society or in a heterogeneous family context.

A religious element of identity is part of the overall sense of one's EGO, i.e. personal identity. On the grounds of the formerly mentioned theory of identity (cf. E.H. Ericson), it can be assumed that the process of acquiring the religious part of identity is related to the process of developing self-awareness by means of gaining one's own autonomy. Autonomy, in turn, is gained through one's own involvement and activity that "goes beyond what is socially expected", and "through gaining a perspective of value system"<sup>24</sup> on the moral code and attitudes acquired in the family<sup>25</sup>. Going beyond the level of so-called culturally inherited identity in a family<sup>26</sup> results in discontinuity

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40,000. Further characteristics concerning diversity of religious life in the Beskidy region and Cieszyn Silesia has been presented in the following analyses: J. Suchodolska: *Kontakty towarzyskie wyznacznikiem tolerancji religijnej na Śląsku Cieszyńskim*. (in:) T. Lewowicki and E. Ogrodzka-Mazur (eds): *Osobowość i społeczne funkcjonowanie młodzieży regionu Podbeskidzia*. Katowice 1997, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, footnote no 13; B. Grabowska: *Religijność młodzieży Podbeskidzia*. (in:) T. Lewowicki (ed.): *Společnost mladých na pograničí*. Cieszyn 1995, Uniwersytet Śląski — Filia w Cieszynie, pp. 67—81; J. Kozłowski, J. Langner and T. Zagajewski: *Atlas Wyznań w Polsce*. Kraków 1989, Krajowa Agencja Wydawnicza.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. T. Lewowicki: *Problemy tożsamości narodowej — w poszukiwaniu sposobów uogólnionych ujęć kwestii poczucia tożsamości i zachowań z tym poczuciem związanych*. (in:) M. M. Urlińska (ed.), op. cit., p.58.

<sup>23</sup> The phenomenon within which one easily identifies with a few groups (communities) is described by: J. Smolicz: *Kultura i nauczanie w społeczeństwie wieloetnicznym*. Warszawa 1990, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe; B. Bartz: *Idea wielokulturowego wychowania w nowoczesnych społeczeństwach*. Duisburg — Radom 1997, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Technologii i Eksploatacji, pp. 114—115.

<sup>24</sup> The process of identity acquisition (also in its religious aspect) partly connected with the reserve towards the transmitted values is described by: J. Mariański: *Młodzież między tradycją i ponowoczesnością. Wartości moralne w świadomości maturzystów*. Lublin 1995, Redakcja Wydawnictw Katolickiego Uniwersytetu Lubelskiego, pp. 299—309.

<sup>25</sup> One should remember that in the process of self-awareness development the young people may reject or reshape the norms and the model of family life which are cultivated in the family; they are selected through the system of values present within a particular family. The role of the family in this respect is described by L. Dyczewski. Cf. L. Dyczewski, op. cit. (1994), pp. 59, 113—114.

<sup>26</sup> The thesis of inheriting religion and morality through culture within the family, introduced by sociologists, seems justifiable also when referred to human identity. J. Mariański discusses social and cultural conditions of continuity or change in transmission of values and behaviour. Cf. J. Mariański, op. cit., pp. 297—310.

of the process of value transmission to a younger generation, especially when cultural inheritance is diverse in terms of transmission of beliefs, attitudes and philosophy.

Lack of uniform cultural inheritance, including religious inheritance, and lack of experience of homogeneous religious attitudes in a heterogeneous family may offer broad perspective, conducive to developing open-mindedness and mature dynamic forms of social communication<sup>27</sup>. However, the situation can cause a failure in developing an identity beyond what the individual has inherited, i.e. conferred identity. No research has been conducted to confirm this hypothesis; nevertheless, on the basis of what can be observed in life of the community, such cases can be expected to occur. The diversity of the Polish-Czech transfrontier region — especially its denominational diversity emphasised in this paper — not only concerns a historically and culturally determined region, but it touches family life. Therefore, the issue of acquiring and developing identity in a heterogeneous family environment becomes significant.

Studies carried out in this region deal with conditions for acquiring national and ethnic identity. In this respect individuals claim their identities to be of two-dimensional or sometimes of three-dimensional character<sup>28</sup>. The case seems to be different in terms of religious identity<sup>29</sup>. Religious identity of a given individual — along with an active perception of religious attitudes and values exhibited in a family environment — can develop into individual modifications thereof. However, due to passivity and indolence of an individual, the process of religious identity development may be disturbed, and it tends to remain at the level of inheritance, as it is the case with religious attitudes<sup>30</sup>.

Cieszyn Silesia has been acknowledged as a region of particularly strong religiosity<sup>31</sup>, with strong awareness of regional culture, rituality and specific

<sup>27</sup> L. Korporowicz: *Osobowość i komunikacja w społeczeństwie transformacji*. Warszawa 1996, Instytut Kultury, pp. 160—178.

<sup>28</sup> Problems concerning identity of the individual perceived as multi-dimensional phenomenon are mentioned by: T. Lewowicki: *Problemy tożsamości narodowej — w poszukiwaniu sposobów uogólnionych ujęć kwestii tożsamości i zachowań z tym poczuciem związanych*. (in:) M. M. Urlińska (ed.), op. cit., p. 58; T. Lewowicki: *Poczucie tożsamości narodowej młodzieży. Studium z pogranicza polsko-czeskiego*. op. cit., pp. 134—135.

<sup>29</sup> Robert Spaemann describes religious identity as having three meanings: religious identity of the individual, identity of religion in the sense of beliefs and identity of religious community. Cf. R. Spaemann: *Tożsamość religijna*. (in:) K. Michalski (ed.): *Tożsamość w czasach zmiany. Rozmowy z Castel Gandolfo*. Kraków 1995, Znak, pp. 59—60; L. Dyczewski, op. cit. (1995), p. 68.

<sup>30</sup> According to J. Mariański religious attitudes are very specific elements of family culture; they are to great extent inherited. Cf. J. Mariański, op. cit., p. 307.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. B. Grabowska: *Religijność młodzieży Podbeskidzia*. (in:) T. Lewowicki (ed.): *Společnosti młodzieżowe na Pograniczu*, op. cit., pp. 67—81; M. Michalska: *Religia jako wyznacznik tożsamości*



social bonds. The bond with the *small homeland*, i.e. close homeland, appears to be a peculiar characteristic of the Silesian culture. Taking into account the above, the following hypotheses have been formed:

- the process of acquisition of religious identity by young people with a heterogeneous denominational background depends on religious involvement of family members;
- young people with a denominationally heterogeneous background and a strong sense of belonging to the region experience more favourable conditions for development of their personal religious identity than when compared with those who have little experience of community bonds.

The research attempted to examine the correlation between a sense of religious identity as expressed by young people coming from a denominationally heterogeneous background<sup>32</sup> and a specific climate of a given family, demonstrated mainly by social life patterns. The lack of bonds with the region as well as strong identification with the region appear relevant for the present analysis. The degree of parents' religiosity and the type of religious identity represented by the subject group have also been attempted to be accounted for to add to the social life patterns. These family characteristics have been considered significant for the study, due to the firm position that the concept of family holds in the consciousness of young people in Poland — in spite of the marked depreciation of a *small community* in the value system of young people in other European countries<sup>33</sup>. Similarly, the potent role that family has in transmission of regional traditions and values<sup>34</sup> in Cieszyn Silesia should not be neglected.

According to W. Świątkiewicz, the family, its social behaviour patterns and "its stability and sacred character, create a natural and obvious world of

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*etnicznej ludności polskiej na Zaolziu.* (in:) I. Bukowska-Floreńska (ed.): *Kultury regionalne i pogranicza kulturowe a świadomość etniczna. Studia etnologiczne i antropologiczne*. Vol. 2. Katowice 1999, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego, pp. 257—267.

<sup>32</sup> This heterogeneity refers to the families of heterogeneous denominational background — mainly the Catholics and the Protestants. They live in Cieszyn Silesia, mainly the towns of Wisła, Ustroń, Skoczów, Brenna and Cieszyn. The sample group of 20 families, 12 of them were two-generation families, was chosen (in 1999) according to strict criteria. A selected individual attending secondary school and the parents did the task assigned by the researcher.

<sup>33</sup> Polish young people recognise the family as one of the most important values. Cf. L. Dyczewski. op. cit. (1995), p. 106; J. Rogala-Oblękowska: *Współczesna polska rodzina — mity i fakty*. (in:) B. Fatyga and A. Tyszkiewicz (eds): *Dzisiejsza młodzież. Stereotypy i rzeczywistość po 1989 roku*. Radom 1997, Wydawnictwo Instytutu Technologii i Eksploatacji, p. 172; W. Świątkiewicz: *Tradycja i wybór. Socjologiczne studium religijności na Górnym Śląsku*. Katowice—Wrocław 1997, DA, p. 79.

<sup>34</sup> J. Piekarski: *Międzypokoleniowa transmisja wartości w środowisku rodzinnym małego miasta. Wychowawcze studium relacji międzygeneracyjnych*. Łódź 1992, Uniwersytet Łódzki, pp. 27—35; B. Kosek-Nita, op. cit., pp. 163—166.

social life, basic reality, which becomes a permanent symbolic frame of reference"<sup>35</sup>.

The family is the ground for the origin and development of religious involvement; religiosity patterns forged in the period of adolescence<sup>36</sup> constitute the basis for the development of religious life of young people and of their denominational identity. One could suppose that erosion and eventual break in the continuity of transmission of religious values in the family as well as its distortion may lead to a gradual secularisation of life and social mentality.

Therefore, it has been assumed that the attitudes and behaviour patterns related to identity are influenced not only by denominational diversity within the family, but they are also affected by a certain model of religious life and bonds with the region.

The collected data allow for distinguishing certain tendencies in the researched field.

The young people from the surveyed group reacted in a sensitive and dynamic way to transmission of religious values. Despite the denominational diversity of the families subjected to analysis, continuation of traditions and symbolic religious practices — differing due to the parents' denominational diversity — appeared to be an integrating factor for the family and pose no real danger to the identity of a young individual. One could quote Różańska, who claims that religious diversity naturally fosters young people's open-mindedness and religious tolerance. Moreover, cognitive activity of young people — clearly manifested in the families involved in the church life — can act as a spur for development of enriched ecumenical religiosity<sup>37</sup>.

Young people pointed to the need for dialogue in their families. They sought interpretation for diverse beliefs and religious practices of their parents rather than emphasizing differences. Undoubtedly, the phenomenon relates to the young people's identity, shaped and developed in a denominationally heterogeneous environment. This kind of environment — with its internal uniformity of attitudes and religiosity patterns — is conducive to the development of an identity in a mature form, functioning as a part of one's sense of the self.

The conclusions can be drawn especially in case of those young people who live in religious and open-minded families, where denominational diversity does

<sup>35</sup> W. Świątkiewicz, op. cit., p. 79.

<sup>36</sup> In the studies on religiosity conducted in the 80's about 30 percent of the respondents judged their religious involvement the greatest in the period of their lives before finishing primary school rather than in their adulthood. Only 4 percent of them declared the other way round. Cf. K. Darczewska. *Rodzina i postawy religijne*. (in:) M. Jarosz (ed.): *Rodzina polska lat osiemdziesiątych*. Warszawa 1982, Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe.

<sup>37</sup> A. Różańska. *Zaolziańskie rodziny mieszane wyznaniowo a wychowanie międzykulturowe* (in:) T. Lewowicki, J. Suchodolska: *Rodzina — Wychowanie — Wielokulturowość*. Cieszyn 2000, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego Filia w Cieszynie.

not result in family dissent. In case of the families where only one parent is a member of a church and shows concern for transmission of tradition and religious practices, denominational divergence rarely leads to development of mature self-awareness and identity. The examples discussed above show the conditions of identity development in heterogeneous families as favourable.

Identity of the young people who grow up in families where denominational differences are a cause of dissent or in families where faith and religiosity have ceased to be a meaningful category within self-awareness can be regarded as an identity with signs of disintegration. A new type of religious identity has emerged within the category of self-descriptive declarations — *a Christian* — which definitely has its source in new social mentality and in modified life patterns. It may be, however, an attempt of self-identification, a consequence of the disintegration of identity mentioned above. Nevertheless, this estimation cannot be considered objective without further research.

In the light of the analysis presented above, the author's assumption that the process of religious identity acquisition of the young people of Cieszyn Silesia depends on the religious life patterns of their families can be empirically supported.

Moreover, it can be deduced — on the basis of the research findings — that there is no statistic correlation between regional bonds of a given family and religious identity development. Young people of Cieszyn Silesia reveal a strong attachment to the region — presumably a result of educational practices based on their parents' system of values<sup>38</sup>. Nevertheless, this seems to have no consequences on their identity development.

Translated by Joanna Kawulok

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<sup>38</sup> One can notice some family influence as far as attachment to the area (i.e. Cieszyn Silesia) is concerned. There are some observable relations such as parents' local patriotism and their children's local patriotism.